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NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES

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EDUCATING DEMOCRACY.

The Hon. H. G. R. Mason, Minister of Education, in a recent broadcast talk outlined the work of the Country Library Service and made some remarks of general application on the subject of libraries in war time. "This is a good time," he said, "to think about libraries and their purpose. Their usefulness does not cease when we are thrown into war. On the contrary. In war their usefulness becomes especially noticeable. They have an especial bearing on the people's morale, for instance. For those people who are not on the fighting front, but all the same feel, and will feel more and more, the strain of the situation, books are indispensable in the effort to keep lively, efficient and cheerful. And unless we can keep lively, efficient and cheerful at home, we are not helping those who are fighting. I well remember from my own experience in the last war what the small country library meant. Much more will it mean now when it has the strong support of the Country Library Service."

Mr. Mason said that it was the Government's belief that responsibility for library service should be shared between the local authority and the General Government; that the Government believed also that library service in its fullest sense, apart from the strictly limited service of the fiction book club, should be free to every man, woman and child. This belief was shared by other democratic peoples "for libraries are free in Great Britain and the United States and Canada, they *were* free in Denmark, Norway and Czechoslovakia." In his conclusion Mr. Mason sounds a note of warning and of exhortation: "If I conclude with a plea for generous treatment of children's libraries, it is not for sentimental but for entirely practical reasons. Libraries generally in this country have been backward too long. Now that we are starting to make up a little of the ground, let us not forget that the future is in the hands of the hundreds of thousands of children in our schools. We can give them a chance by training them as well as we can possibly afford. If they have not books, good books, and books which range over the problems which we are handing on to them to solve because we cannot solve them ourselves, they will lose the wisdom they might have had from the turmoil we are now going through, and be in no better case to avoid a repetition of our troubles."

BRANCHES AND SECTIONS.

OTAGO.

On September 9th, the Otago Branch held an interesting meeting at the Dunedin Public Library at which Wellard's "Book Selection" was discussed. Miss Dorothy Neal outlined the introduction of this book, and Miss Jean McGill spoke on Part 2 which is the history of public libraries in U.S.A. and England, while Mr. John Harris discussed Part 3 which actually deals with book selection.

WELLINGTON.

About sixty members and friends were present at a presentation of British educational sound film, shown by courtesy of Mr. H. H. Newton in the Lecture Hall at the Central Library on Tuesday, 1st October. The meeting was most successful, and a sum was raised for patriotic purposes by the sale of tickets.

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GENERAL NEWS

Auckland Public Library.

The Auckland Public Library celebrated its sixtieth anniversary recently. Although the library is only 60 years old as a municipal institution, its history goes back to 1842, when the Mechanics Institute was founded. The Institute, which comprised a library and community meeting hall, provided for thirty-eight years, from 1842-1880, a most important community service supplying literary recreation to its members, lectures and classes of instruction for the people, and a meeting place for citizens. In that old hall many important meetings were held and a large number of flourishing institutions, societies and concerns of to-day were conceived and born in it. The Institute's record of service deserves the esteem of citizens of to-day.

In the later years of its history the Institute encountered financial difficulties which resulted in an approach being made to the City Council for pecuniary assistance. The Council was unable to comply with the request and an offer was then made to transfer the site and buildings to the City. The Council resolved to accept the proposal subject to ratepayers endorsing their action by a poll for the purpose of bringing into operation the "Public Libraries Act." The vote resulted in 637 for and 91 against. In this way the Auckland Public Library became the first free library to be established in New Zealand under the Libraries Act.

In 1882 Sir George Grey intimated his intention of presenting his library to the citizens, and the following year a bequest was received from the late Edward Costley of £12,150. In 1887 the new library building was opened with a stock of 15,000 volumes, including a number of incunabula. A Lending Department was established in 1889, and from it has grown the large number of suburban branch libraries. A Children's Section was opened in 1918, a Commercial Section in 1920, and a Music Division in 1928.

New Plymouth and Rural Districts School Library Service.

Mr. A. K. Robertshaw, the President of the Service, reports after two years' work that the stock is 2,750 volumes, distribution is to 27 schools covering approximately 1,850 pupils. Due acknowledgement is made to Mr. A. L. Low, Librarian of the New Plymouth Public Library, who is in control of the distribution of the books.

Interloan Procedure.

Libraries taking part in the Interloan scheme are following many different methods in small points of procedure not covered by the actual rules. A statement is therefore to be compiled by the Standing Committee on Inter-Library Co-operation to cover doubtful points.

Those librarians who have any critical or constructive comments to make, or who wish to describe any aspects of their own methods of handling interloan requests which might be generally adopted, are requested to communicate before the end of October with the Convener of the Committee, Mr. C. W. Collins, Canterbury University College, Christchurch.

Wanted.

Mr. N. H. Good, Librarian of the Law Library, P.O. Box 58, Auckland, is anxious to ascertain the whereabouts of any copy of the following; or a copy of any other edition thereof published in the 40's.

1. Rules touching the administration of estates and effects of persons deceased. 1842. (Hocken page 105).
2. Rules and orders touching the practice of the Supreme and County Courts of New Zealand. 1843. (Hocken page 112).

Anyone able to supply the information is asked to be good enough to communicate directly with Mr. Good.

Friends of the Library Movement.

Council has received a report on this subject but has decided that the present is not an opportune time to approach the matter on an Association scale. It has been decided to leave the formation of Friends of the Library Groups to the discretion of local authorities. A certain amount of material on the subject may be borrowed from the Association headquarters.

Appointments.

At the recent meeting of Council it was decided that library authorities should be asked to advertise vacancies for any senior position a sufficient length of time before the appointment to enable people in other parts of the Dominion to make application, and to offer the columns of NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES for such advertisements. In this way local bodies would be certain of covering the field of applicants adequately and would have a considerably better chance of obtaining a satisfactory librarian.

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N.Z.L.A. Information Exchange Sheet.

Members who attended the 1939 Conference at Palmerston North will remember the following remit which was passed then: "That this Conference approve, and refer to the Council for consideration, the proposal to issue to such member libraries as are concerned a mimeographed 'N.Z.L.A. Information Exchange Sheet'." The Council has decided that there is at present need for a frequent and cheap means of communication among librarians concerning matters which are too urgent, too ephemeral or too trivial to be treated in NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES. Such a sheet would include information about duplicate material available for exchange, material wanted, locations wanted for interloan or otherwise, notes of important acquisitions and proposed purchases which might save others needless duplication, and many other odd items which arise every week.

It is proposed to issue the first number at the end of October, and librarians wishing to use the sheet are asked to send postcards to "N.Z.L.A. Information Exchange Sheet, P.O. Box 1529, Wellington, C.1," noting simply and in a form suitable for insertion their request or statement. The "Sheet" will be issued at first at irregular intervals depending on the number of items received, but after a few experimental numbers the date of publication will be fixed (either weekly or fortnightly).

Librarians wishing to receive this publication are asked to send their names in to the Secretary as soon as possible. All members or affiliated institutions of the Association will be entitled to receive one issue free of charge, but librarians who wish to receive the publication regularly are asked to send in a supply of stamped self-addressed envelopes for use with all numbers after the first.

This Sheet will probably develop into an important means of co-operation among the major libraries at least. *Contributions for the first number should be forwarded as soon as possible.*

Personal.

Miss Leslie Callaway, formerly assistant at the Canterbury University College Library, has taken up her duties as Librarian at the Hawera Public Library.

Miss Ada Fache, assistant at the Dunedin Public Library, has been appointed Librarian at the Rangiora Public Library.

Conference.

Miss J. McLaughlin, formerly Librarian of the Rangiora Public Library, has been appointed to the staff of the Country Library Service.

It has been decided to hold the annual Conference in Dunedin from Tuesday 18th, to Friday, 21st February, 1941.

Printing Exhibit.

Five hundred years ago Johann Gutenberg, of the city of Mainz, invented the craft of printing from moveable types. The quincentennial is being celebrated throughout the world by means of exhibitions, lectures and publications. These celebrations are now being extended to New Zealand, and the Council of the Association feels that more publicity would be given to the occasion if libraries all over the country were to hold displays simultaneously. The week *Monday, 25th, to Saturday, 30th November,* has been chosen as the most suitable time, and members of the Association are asked to make every effort to see that the exhibition in their own centre is a success. The Association will endeavour to arrange for appropriate articles to be published in the leading dailies and weeklies during this time, but individual members should give what additional publicity they can to the displays. It has been suggested that notices should be sent to the schools advising them of the displays and inviting children to see the exhibition.

The displays should cover the history of printing from Gutenberg to the present day. Samples of fine printing, photographs of printing plant and machinery, books on printing and exhibits of work in progress are only a few suggestions. It is felt that librarians even in the small and medium sized libraries will be able to arrange an exhibit. Local printers and booksellers will no doubt be very glad to help. Remember the date—*25th — 30th NOVEMBER. The Secretary of the Association will be glad to answer any enquiries which individual librarians may wish to make regarding the proposal, and to be informed as to which libraries intend to participate.*

Junior Books.

An announcement was made in the last number of the bulletin that Miss Neal's list "Junior Books" would be sold at 2/- a copy for non-members of the Association. It should be noted, however, that *postage is additional.*

Book Imports.

The Comptroller of Customs advises with reference to the importation of printed books and periodicals during the Fifth Licensing Period:

"(1) The restriction upon the importation of particular periodicals applies only to importations from foreign countries. It will be necessary for individual importers to submit the names of the periodicals which they wish to import under their licences and as stated in the published schedule approval will be given only in respect of publications reflecting current opinion and learned scientific or technical publications.

(2) The arrangement made in the Fourth Licensing Period for the granting of additional licenses in respect of non-fiction publications to Public and University Libraries will continue in the Fifth Period, and the libraries concerned should accordingly submit orders to the Officer in Charge of the Country Library Service as formerly."

"Foreign" in paragraph 1 does not include Great Britain or other British countries.

A SCHEME FOR TRAINING.

(By S. C. Allen, M.D., F.R.C.S., New Plymouth).

Recent correspondence in the Bulletin has called attention to the need for a suitable form of training in librarianship for New Zealand conditions. It is disappointing that, although much attention has been focussed on the subject during the last three years, few concrete proposals have been put forward. I submit here a tentative scheme which I think would meet our requirements and would be workable.

While the functions of the public library have extended in recent years to a surprising extent, and while public interest is growing, little progress has been made in the training and status of the librarian. As the major burden of the success of a library depends on the librarian, I believe that unless something is done, general library facilities and book supplies will outdistance the factor on which success mainly depends—the librarian.

We cannot too soon commence to carry out the recommendation of the Munn-Barr report of 1934 under the heading; Professional training and remuneration. "Means must be devised to raise the general and professional standards of librarians and assistant librarians. It is recommended that for all urban public library systems and all university college libraries, the matriculation examination of the University of New Zealand be the minimum required for appointment to a library position. In addition every encouragement should be given to young assistants (1) to acquire a university degree and (2) to study for the professional examinations of the Library Association (London) or to take a course in librarianship at the Library School of the University of London or one of the American universities. Salary increases and advancement in position should be made dependent upon satisfactory progress toward fuller training. As soon as the general level of salaries can be raised, only university graduates should be eligible for appointment to professional staffs."

This ideal of librarianship has long been entertained by those best qualified to express an opinion. In a Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales presented to Parliament in 1927 we read: "The two main requirements for a librarian are a liberal education and technical training. In a certain sense, the latter is the more indispensable, since no one can conduct the business of a library without some acquaintance with the technique of classification, cataloguing, the care of books and other library routine. But in a wider sense it is the other qualification that is the more essential. Any man or woman with a good general education can, if the necessary opportunity be given, acquire a knowledge of library technique; but the completest knowledge of technique will not qualify a member of a library staff for the highest posts in the profession. For the welfare of the library service, it is essential to recognise that LIBRARIANSHIP IS A LEARNED PROFESSION."

I wish to stress this aspect of the question. The training of a librarian should be interdependent on the functioning of two bodies; the University and the Library Association.

Although there are difficulties in arranging such a working co-operation they should be surmountable.

In Britain the only university school is the London University Library School, and its one year course appears to suffer because the train-

ing on the technical side is not sufficient. It thus happens that the examinations of the English Library Association compete successfully with the London University. The English Library Association, by means of excellent official manuals and a high-standard syllabus, has arrived at a qualification which places its possessor in the highest grade of librarianship, but I have no doubt it relies on the universities to give the training necessary to enable candidates to pass the examinations in the academic subjects of its curriculum. The link although non-official is none the less present.

Already the New Zealand Library Association has established a policy link with the University in that entrants for professional staff positions are usually required to have passed the matriculation examination. Presumably the university would be helpful in furthering any plan which would increase the avenues of employment of its graduates. It is suggested that it might grant a Diploma in Librarianship to those of its graduates who followed a rigidly prescribed syllabus of instruction and training such as that laid down by the English Library Association—a syllabus to be approved by the university.

The failure to get university co-operation would force the Association to conduct its own examinations as the need for the establishment of some form of training and qualification is one which demands almost immediate attention.

There is a danger of our falling into the same mistake as is being made in New South Wales where the Sydney Public Library, at the request of the government, is establishing a permanent school for librarians which, as far as can be gathered, has no organic connection with the university.

While it is granted that the English L.A. has built up an unrivalled status for its qualification, we in New Zealand are too small to aspire to being able to grant a qualification which would enable its possessor to occupy any of the higher positions in the library world. The University of New Zealand has quite rightly taken the view that it should not examine for diplomas in subjects which are not taught in any of the four colleges. If the University were willing to examine in such subjects, it would become little more than an office for the affixing of a rubber stamp to all kinds of professional and technical certificates. It is clear then, if there is to be a University Diploma in Librarianship, the technical subjects will have to be taught in one or more of the university colleges. There are scarcely enough potential librarians in the Dominion for the subject to be taught throughout the country, but there are certainly enough to make up a class of reasonable numbers (say six or seven) in one centre. In other words, a School of Librarianship might be established in one centre and some arrangement of exchanging or seconding made by which selected cadets could go to that centre for one year's tuition. Doubtless the governing bodies of the various libraries would co-operate in this matter.

One further point. It would seem desirable to frame the syllabus in such a way that the suggested Diploma covers the ground of the English Library Association—both of the Associateship and the Fellowship—and that it demands a standard of attainment at least equal to that demanded by English L.A. examiners. A syllabus is here proposed of such a kind that Part I. would qualify a cadet for Associateship and Part II. for the Fellowship. Perhaps the English L.A. would be willing in a short time to recognise N.Z. University qualifications without further examinations. This would depend of course on the status and qualifications of teachers and examiners.

It seems convenient to divide the syllabus into Intermediate; Part I.; Part II.

The term Intermediate is used in the university sense and is not to be confused with the Intermediate examination of the Library Association. It should test the academic elements in the librarians' training. I suggest that a reasonable demand would be that a candidate should pass college terms in the first stage of four of the following subjects: English, French, German, Latin, Greek, History, Economics, Logic and Ethics, Psychology.

Part I. should consist of a syllabus roughly approximating to the present demands for the Associateship of the English Library Association. For Part I. it might become usual for the cadet to take advantage of the University regulation for exemption from lectures.

Part II. should consist of the higher demands made on candidates for the English F.L.A. The instruction for Part II. might well be given in one centre only but the examination should be of such a kind that in general the candidate would be required to attend the classes. It might be advisable to provide one or two years' advanced post-graduate training for the librarian who is to be appointed as Lecturer in Librarianship in the selected centre and money for this purpose might be raised by special application to the Carnegie Trust or in some other way.

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LIBRARY TRAINING :—WHAT WE NEED IN NEW ZEALAND.

(By J. O. Wilson, A.L.A., General Assembly Library).

Great progress has been made in the standard of library training in New Zealand during the last ten years. Then there was but one librarian who could lay claim to any certificate of proficiency in librarianship. There were of course others who had either studied abroad or travelled overseas for experience but for one reason or another had not received any special recognition of their training. It is largely due to the encouragement of these people that the advance has been made. To-day the latest English Library Association year book lists eleven Fellows and eight Associates dwelling in the Dominion, while there are others with different but no less valuable qualifications.

How has this advance been made? Certain of those qualified were born and trained overseas, others have gone overseas from this country, a number through the generosity of the Carnegie Corporation, to receive training and experience, but the majority have remained here and received their specialized training through hard work in their leisure hours. It is these students that we must consider in deciding our needs in New Zealand. Recently there have been an increasing number of proposals for the drawing up of a syllabus more suited to New Zealand conditions, but in doing this we should be acting very prematurely. What we need first of all is trained librarians to act as tutors.

It should then be possible for us to make some agreement with the English Library Association to take over the correspondence courses which at present we must obtain from them. Many of the difficulties under which our students now labour are due largely to the distance from the tutor, and thus the delays due to time in the post should be materially reduced, while at the same time there should be some saving in cost of postage.

It would be inadvisable to take over all the courses immediately and at once, but only as tutors could be found to take over each course. It might be some considerable time before courses in the more advanced subjects could be given, but I have no doubt that eventually it should be done. As at present, supplementary classes could still be used.

At first the tutors could continue under the administration of the English Library association, so that we could have the benefit of their experience, though the New Zealand Library Association could act as agent and superintend the distribution of the courses. Eventually, however, the New Zealand Library Association should take over the whole administration of the courses.

With the experience gained in the administration of these courses, our next move could then be considered. If it is thought best to have a special syllabus and certificates, we should have some basis on which to work. The tutors would have gained a good deal of specialized knowledge about New Zealand conditions, together with our needs and many other items. With this end in view, we could introduce into the courses, readings on New Zealand library law, etc.; a scheme which would entail slight extra work on the part of the student, but which would be of great advantage to him. Similarly references should be given to articles with a New Zealand bias in our own publications.

Special arrangements could perhaps be made to give courses to those who desired to continue with the English examinations, but this would depend on the number desirous of so doing. Whatever happens, we must not allow ourselves to be saddled with some scheme which will fulfil but portion of our needs; we must have a certificate which will be of recognized standing in the profession and outside, both here and abroad.

Then finally, we would be on the road to attaining our ultimate ideal, a school of librarianship attached, perhaps, to one of the university colleges. Once again, the groundwork that has been suggested should prove invaluable in constructing a scheme, which, there is no doubt, will greatly benefit librarianship in this country. By progressing slowly we should avoid many of the mistakes inevitable in the launching of a comprehensive scheme.

In conclusion I should like to point out that although I have dealt with a scheme of library training and education, I do not wish to leave the impression that this is all that we as librarians need. No amount of specialized library training can make up for the lack of general background and any scheme should impress on students the need for obtaining this.

Here briefly I have laid down my opinion of our needs in this direction. In many ways they are not ambitious, but, at the moment when many of us are certain to get a course of military training, they may appear so.

THE UNIVERSITY AND LIBRARY TRAINING.

(By Harold G. Miller, M.A., Librarian, Victoria University College, Wellington.)

My views about the proposal to entrust the university with the training of librarians can be stated quite briefly. First, I don't think the university will be willing to take on the job, and second, I don't think the Library Association should let the control of training slip out of its own hands. On the first point it is perhaps sufficient to say that the university has already burnt its fingers badly with enterprises of this kind—for example in the training of forestry experts. Having provided staff and syllabuses and all the rest of it for two schools of forestry, it has been calmly told by the N.Z. Government (which initiated the whole thing) that there is not a sufficient demand for graduates to justify the maintenance of a single school! The advocates of a university school of library studies will have to be able to show that there will be a continuous demand for graduates in such numbers as will justify the trouble and expense involved. I'm afraid they will also have to be prepared for opposition arising out of a conviction that training of this kind is not the kind of work that a university should do at all.

I attach much more importance to the second point, namely that the Library Association would be unwise to let the control of training get out of its own hands. Anyone who is at all familiar with the University of New Zealand knows how hard it is to reach agreement upon a syllabus of instruction, and how maddeningly hard it is to get amendments adopted when once a syllabus has been agreed upon. It takes years! An any rate, whether it is easy or hard, short or long, the matter will not be in the hands of the Association.

In my opinion the N.Z.L.A. should issue its own diploma and keep control of examinations entirely in its own hands. This is not to say that it should not require candidates to pass university examinations in certain subjects. It might be thought wise to require candidates to pass the university examination in English and History prescribed for candidates for the B.A. degree, but the Association should remain perfectly free to alter this requirement as it saw fit. The purely professional subjects it should make its own arrangements for.

DUNEDIN'S INFORMATION DESK.

By Miss Betty P. Randle, Dunedin Public Library.

The information desk at the Dunedin Public Library has now been in operation three years. It began as a small table in a corner of the lending, and has since developed into an attractive green desk, equipped with a phone connecting the desk with all departments in the building. Here, too, is kept the Kardex Index of all magazines and newspapers taken by the library, from which can be found where each issue is kept, and where back numbers are filed. Other equipment at the desk includes a Concise Oxford dictionary, Whitaker's Almanac, Every place in New Zealand, Reference catalogue of Current Literature, Dunedin District Electors' Roll, Index to Plays, Fiction Standard Catalogue, Sequel Story Index, Authors' Handbook, Pears' Encyclopaedia, Constitutional Year Book, Dictionary of pronunciation of Artists' Names, etc., Brief Facts, Enquire Within, Titles and Forms of Address, What's the name Please? (a guide to the correct pronunciation of Current and Prominent Names), List of Newspapers and Magazines registered at the G.P.O., Wellington, and the N.Z. Railway Timetable.

Both numerical and subject records of enquiries are made, and the analysis of these made last year, and published in the library annual report gave a somewhat surprising indication of the tastes of Dunedin's reading public. The record covered a period of nine months ending in March, 1939, and was divided into a general subject account and a more specific account. For instance a section headed Peoples, Places and International Affairs attracted over one thousand members, probably because at that time the European situation aroused interest, and secondly because there were sufficient books in the sections to supply the demand. The public had not lost interest in Health and Hygiene, which had 192 enquiries, 52 dealing with Diet. Out of 440 enquiries for the Home there were 80 for Interior Decoration, 32 for Cooking, while 23 concerned points of Etiquette. Actually these sections have never

had a low average of enquiries. General Travel is another section which is always popular, and every day we have students wanting books in the New Zealand section, especially books on N.Z. Plants and Birds.

In the more specific account of Peoples, Places and International Affairs there were 96 enquiries for Europe, 59 for England, 26 for Scotland, 46 for Germany, and 27 for France, while there was one enquiry for the Balkans, which, shall we say, had not appeared in the headlines. It is interesting to note that in the following March, alone, there were eight enquiries for the Balkans. Owing to the fact that DeBasil's Ballet Company were performing in New Zealand, the enquiries for books on the Ballet soared to a great height and the interest did not wane until February of this year. As one may predict, Espionage, which totalled 17 last year has doubled that amount in five months of this year. Each day's headlines are reflected in the daily enquiries, and all important events have their repercussions at the Information Desk.

The framed prints of the art loan collection are issued from the information desk. Every borrower must fill in a reservation form giving name and artist of the desired print, and his own name and address and telephone number. Notification that the print is available is made by post or telephone, as many of the prints cost up to £7, and every borrower must be checked. Each picture must be signed for, and the rental paid in advance. Renewals may be made on personal application to the library, as the rental for time extension must be paid at the time of the renewal.

The registration of members is also undertaken at the desk. If the applicant cannot be identified, *e.g.*, Municipal Roll, Telephone Directory, or letter, the signed application form is posted to the given address and the applicant on returning the form has a reader's card issued to him. In one or two cases we have had the form returned to us by the General Post Office or by some one at the assumed address.

Jackets for non-fiction books are filed at the information desk. Here we have copied the book-clubs. Experience has shown us that a gay jacket will quickly send an otherwise neglected volume into circulation. Information desk assistants are mainly responsible for displays, although the question of topics is often discussed at general staff meetings. Another information desk duty is the informal instruction of the catalogue. We regularly explain it to all new borrowers, but have to pursue a policy of slow conversion with the rest of our borrowers when the opportunity is open. I suppose 50% of the public have not consulted the catalogue as yet.

Our job at the information desk is, however, answering enquiries for books on definite subjects, and less tangible enquiries for more books like those of A. P. Herbert or Lancelot Hogben. Can all questions be given equal treatment? The young wife requiring something simple on food values, the student wanting a critical book on modern poetry may deserve more time and attention than the casual enquirer for a murder story. All enquiries, however, deserve courteous and intelligent help no matter how trivial they may appear to be. At rush periods an assistant has to think and work quickly, and decisions have to be made about the amount of time a borrower is entitled to if others are waiting. Telephone enquiries are entered on a special form and dealt with as soon as possible. If there is not sufficient material in the lending department then the form is sent to the Reference department where the matter is dealt with. When the lending department cannot supply sufficient material on, *e.g.*, the History of the Willow Pattern or perhaps an early history of say, Queenstown, then the person is advised to consult the Reference Department or the New Zealand Room as the case may be.

Only experienced assistants work at the information desk, a duty for which a knowledge not only of the book stock but of human nature is required. Though the desk certainly adds to one's knowledge of human nature. Glancing round the room on odd occasions it is good to see the schoolboy lapping up Popular Science and chewing vigorously at gum. On a hot afternoon the elderly man in a much too comfortable chair, nursing a Time magazine on his chest, nodding occasionally to let us know he is not asleep. One feels sympathetic towards the elderly woman who sits with one eye on a magazine and the other hopefully awaiting the sight of an assistant with an Annie Swan.

A young lawyer admits that if we have no Damon Runyon, he does not want anything; while a local baker centres his thoughts round life under the sea—fossils, etc. A brilliant medico admitted her all absorbing love for Peter Cheyney, while a fresher has read medical biographies until he looks like one.

I take off my hat to the final year man, who, looking exhausted, took a deep breath, and asked for Alice in Wonderland.

XUM

CORRESPONDENCE.

[At the direction of Council the columns of NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES are open for discussion of the proposed National Library Workers' Union: but the Association accepts no responsibility for any of the opinions expressed.]

The Editor, 30/9/40.
New Zealand Libraries,
WELLINGTON.

Dear Sir,—The report presented to Council and circulated to Branches entitled "Unionism as it affects library workers" gives for the first time a concise picture of the steps to be taken in the formation of a New Zealand library employees industrial union of workers.

Perhaps some will say why a union at all? But the time is past when discussion of unionism could be considered as a purely academic exercise. The question is not whether we are, or are not, to have unions—that is a matter which is outside our control,—but what form such unions are to take. To refuse to take steps about the formation of a library union will not enable library workers to remain outside a trade union. To this scores of library assistants who have been forced to join a union in which they have no interest and from which they get little benefit, can testify. Not all library assistants are in unions, but the tendency is for all workers, sooner or later, to have to join a trade union of some sort. Are we to wait passively until we are split up into a dozen or more different unions in each of which the library workers will be such a small minority that they will have no effective voice in the conduct of their affairs, or have we the energy, the library consciousness, one might add, the commonsense, to start at once to form our own union, a union in the affairs of which every library worker will have an effective voice, a union which will be concerned wholly with the welfare of library workers and the best interests of the library movement in this Dominion? The one question is have we already waited too long?

Most workers, with the spread of unionism, have been able to join a union which relates to their work; there has been no such provision made for library assistants. Library assistants, employed by local bodies, in many cases, have had to join the Local Bodies' Officers' Union, but in some areas there seems doubt as to whether this union covers library workers, and there is reason to think that not all persons employed in libraries under the control of a local governing authority are members of the Local Bodies' Officers' Union. Various anomalies exist—in one case members of a public library staff were members of a union, but, following upon the demands by the union regarding conditions of work which were incompatible with the functioning of the library, the library staff left the union; in two comparable towns one chief librarian has been forced to join the union and the other is not a member of it. Salary schedules vary with each union. In some districts the Local Bodies' Officers' union award has no special provision for library workers and it is most difficult to fit them into schedules designed for other and quite different types of employees. Library workers doing comparable work and with comparable qualifications, but working under different awards in different districts, get different rates of pay,—their one point in common being their almost invariable lowness. But not all library employees are covered by existing awards or work in libraries controlled by local bodies. Such unions do not cover University libraries, libraries of learned societies, or public libraries under the control of private committees. Surely the need for a union designed especially for library workers is urgent. The basis of a library union should be occupation, not district or type of employer. Library workers five hundred miles apart have more in common with each other than with the gas meter readers, typists, parks inspectors, etc., who are employed by their respective authorities. Therefore why not a national union of library workers?

How can we achieve this? The following steps are necessary:—

(i.) To form a society of workers. This must include at least 15 library assistants, (or, where the total number of library workers in any industrial district is under 56, one-fourth of the total), in at least four industrial districts. This society must be properly constituted with the necessary rules and elected officers.

(ii.) To apply for registration of this society as an industrial union.

(iii.) To agree upon salary schedules. (In this the information collected and work done by the Salaries Committee of the N.Z. L.A. will be most useful).

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(iv.) To get employers of library workers, by negotiation if possible, failing that by trying to obtain an award from the Arbitration Court, to agree to our salary schedules.

Present membership of a union is no bar to joining the society of library workers, but such membership would have to be retained until such time as the union of library workers secured an award. These members, however, should try to enlist the co-operation of their local union secretaries, in order that these unions should not oppose the registration of a library workers' union. At this stage of the proceedings no one can guarantee that a union of library workers will be able to secure a satisfactory agreement, but at the same time, it is difficult to see how the formation of such a union could be prejudicial to the interests of library workers. No great expense is involved in obtaining an award and it is fairly certain that clerical and other expenses would not involve a higher subscription than that being levied by existing unions. In fact, once an award was obtained, it is probable that a union could be run on a smaller subscription.

As library workers are too scattered to make a general meeting possible to initiate such a society, I venture to offer myself as temporary organiser for the purpose of receiving enrolments. When sufficient members have enrolled officers would need to be elected and a committee set up. This could be done either by postal ballot or by having a meeting in one centre. The first step—enrolment—rests with the individual library worker. Those who approve the idea of a National Union of Library Employees and are willing to join the society which must first be formed, are asked to send me their names and addresses. It is suggested that as a sign of bona fides and in order to provide funds for immediate postal and stationery expenses each person enrolling should pay one shilling. When the stage of electing officers and fixing subscriptions is reached any balance remaining from these shillings would be credited against the subscriptions of those who had paid a shilling upon enrolment. Much correspondence could be saved if some one person in each library or district is appointed to collect names and forward them to me. Persons who are not in a centre, but are isolated from other members of the profession, should write direct to me offering to join a society of library employees.—Yours faithfully,

MARY FLEMING.

Country Library Service,
Parliament Buildings,
WELLINGTON, C.1.

REVIEWS.

PITT, E.R. State aid to libraries: principles and practice with special application to Victoria. Presidential address delivered to the Australian Institute of Librarians. Melbourne, June, 1939. Adelaide, 1939.

A five-week training course for suburban, country, departmental and teacher librarians, centralised purchasing, cataloguing and classification, expansion of the Travelling Library scheme attached to the Victoria Public Library, more selective distribution of the Government grant to libraries, the appointment of an inspector who would be called "Library Adviser" —these are the most important points of the scheme drawn up by the Chief Librarian of the Victoria Public Library, and co-author of the Munn-Pitt report, for the improvement of library service in Victoria.

Victoria, population 1,795,500, area 87,900 square miles, is comparable in size and in some respects in library history with New Zealand, so it is interesting to note that it appears to be a good deal more backward. Mr. Pitt's thesis is that "to give aid to a library which is unable or unwilling to discharge its proper functions in its community is simply a waste of money" and the stipulations he proposes regarding freedom of access and adequate local support are similar to those attached to participation in our own Country Library Service. An important difference is that apparently under Mr. Pitt's scheme individual readers anywhere outside metropolitan and over-20,000-population country cities would be able to borrow direct from the Victoria Public Library. In New Zealand readers who live within reach of a library, however small, which is too apathetic or inefficient to participate in the Country Library Service, are excluded from the right of borrowing as individuals from that Service. This is a point worth pondering.

Mr. Pitt's aim is evidently to give a practical, and perhaps short-range plan rather than to deal with the philosophy behind State Aid, but his pamphlet contains some thought-provoking points which unhappily space forbids us to deal with here. One remark in connection with centralised purchasing must be mentioned as

worth investigation by the Book-Buying Committee—" . . . the Public Library of Victoria can give valuable service to country libraries by purchasing their books for them *on the same favourable terms as the State library now enjoys.*" Italics are mine. —*E.J.C.*

SUTHERLAND, I. L. G., ed. "THE MAORI PEOPLE TO-DAY: A GENERAL SURVEY," issued under the auspices of The New Zealand Institute of International Affairs and The New Zealand Council for Educational Research. 1940. xiii., 449 p. illus.

The foreword is by Peter H. Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa) and the individual contributions following a substantial introduction by the editor, are "The Polynesian Maori," by Ernest Beaglehole; "Maori and Pakeha," by Harold Miller; "Maori Land Settlement," by Apirana T. Ngata; "Tribal Organization," by Apirana T. Ngata; "Economic Circumstances," by H. Belshaw; "Health and Social Welfare," by H. B. Turbott; "Maori Education," by D. G. Ball; "Maori Arts and Crafts," by Apirana T. Ngata; "Religious Influences," Apirana T. Ngata and I. L. G. Sutherland; "South Island Maoris," Roger Duff; "The Maori Situation," I. L. G. Sutherland. The book is a substantial volume of 449 pages, well bound, illustrated, and produced, and the jacket is an attractive cover with a Maori motif.

BOOK LIST—October, 1940.

No annotations are given where titles are sufficiently self-explanatory, or for lighter fiction by well-known authors. All prices shown are published prices.

PHILOSOPHY:

Dunne, J. W.—Nothing dies. Faber & Faber. 3/6 1940 115
Simple explanation in non-technical language, of the author's time theory.

Maurois, A.—The art of living. English universities press. 7/6 1940 170
Essays on love, marriage, work, old age, etc.

Strachey, Mrs. St. Loe.—Borrowed children. Murray. 2/6 1940 136.7
Discusses the problems arising from the "evacuation" of children.

RELIGION:

Elder, J. R.—History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 1840-1940. Presbyterian bookroom, Christchurch. 22/6(N.Z.) 1940 285

SOCIOLOGY:

Alsop, J. W. & Kintner, R.—American white paper. The story of American diplomacy and the second world war. M. Joseph. 3/6 1940 327.73
Discussion of American foreign policy from the anti-isolationist viewpoint. Not an official document.

Cohen, Ruth.—The economics of agriculture. Nisbet. 5/6 1940 338.1
Introductory text-book, for the student rather than the general reader.

Lewis, W. A. — Economic problems of to-day. Longmans. 5/- 1940 330
Brief introduction, intended primarily for schools, but also suitable for the general reader.

Mess, H. A.—Social groups in modern England. Nelson. (Discussion books). 2/6 1940 323
Deals with the family, the school, the social class, the church, etc.

universities press. 10/6 1940 383.2

Melville, F. J.—Modern stamp collecting. English

Muir, R.—Civilization and liberty. J. Cape. 2/6 1940 323.44
Brief historical survey of the struggle for political liberty.

"Watchman," pseud.—What of the night. H. Hamilton. 8/6 1940 320.942
Rambling comments on English political policy and personalities.

NATURAL SCIENCE:

Benstead, C. R.—The weather eye. R. Hale. 8/6 1940 551.5
Miscellaneous information about meteorology, entertainingly written.

Jenkinson, S. H.—New Zealanders and science. Department of internal affairs. 5/-(N.Z.) 1940 509
Brief history, emphasising the achievements of prominent New Zealanders.

Sutherland, I. L. G., ed.—The Maori people of to-day. N.Z. Institute of international affairs & N.Z. Council for educational research. 15/-(N.Z.) 1940 572.9931
General survey, comprising chapters on land settlement, living conditions, health, education, etc., each by an expert.

APPLIED SCIENCE:

Aaron, H.—Good health and bad medicine. McBride (Consumers' Union publication). $3 1940 616
Medical advice on common ailments, with lists of "acceptable" and "not acceptable" commercial medicines.

Ellsberg, Edward.—Men under the sea. Harrap. 12/6 1940 627
Realistic account of the perils of deep sea diving.

Gericke, W. F.—Complete guide to soilless gardening. Prentice-Hall. $2.75 1940 631.58

Henderson, F. Y.—Timber: its properties, pests and preservation. Crosby Lockwood. 9/6 1939 674
General survey of timber technology, in non-technical language.

FINE ARTS:—

Fawcett, W.—The young horseman. Black. 7/6 1940 798.2
Elementary but comprehensive guide to horsemanship.

Meade, C. F.—Approach to the hills. Murray. 10/6 1940 796.52
Reminiscences and stories of mountaineering, chiefly in the Alps and the Himalayas.

Porter, E.—Music: A short history. Hutchinson. 10/6 1940 780.9
Readable account for the radio listener.

LITERATURE:

Bemelmans, L.—Small beer. Lane. 7/6 1940 817
Entertaining stories and sketches.

Todd, F. A.—Some ancient novels. Oxford. 7/6 1940 878
Readable essays, originally university extension lectures, on four great Greek and Latin novels.

TRAVEL:

Christopherson, E.—Tristan da Cunha, the lonely isle. Cassell. 12/6 1940 919.7
Detailed account of geography, climate, inhabitants and natural history, by the members of a scientific expedition.

Chiang, Mei-ling (Sung).—China in peace and war. Hurst & Blackett. 16/- 1940 915.1
Miscellaneous articles, centred round current events in China, by Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek.

Holdridge, D.—Arctic lights. Hale. 10/6 1940 917.19
Record of a voyage to explore the coast of Labrador by three young men in a thirty-foot converted sloop.

Noice, H. H.—Back of beyond. Harrap. 8/6 1940 918.1
Travels in a Brazilian jungle by a cinema photographer in search of material.

O'Faolain, Sean.—Irish journey. Longmans. 12/6 1940 914.15
Entertaining account of a holiday trip around Ireland.

Roberts, Cecil.—And so to Bath. Hodder & Stoughton. 10/6 1940 914.2
A leisurely motor trip from London to Bath, with innumerable historical discursions.

Sapieha, Virgilia. Polish profile. Heinemann. 10/6 1940 914.38
Experiences of an American woman who married a Polish Prince and lived in Poland from about 1930 till 1939.

BIOGRAPHY:

Buchan, John. Memory hold-the-door. Hodder & Stoughton. 10/6 1940
Autobiography.

Bateman, D.—Berkely Moynihan, surgeon. Macmillan. 12/6 1940

Woolf, Virginia.—Roger Fry. Hogarth. 12/6 1940
Readable biography of the well-known painter and art critic.

HISTORY:

Divine, Arthur D.—Behind the fleets. John Murray. 5/- 1940 940.53
Stories of the war exploits of small ships auxiliary to the navy.

Olden, R.—Is Germany a hopeless case? Allen & Unwin. 4/6 1940 943.08
Brief survey of German history during the last 200 years.

Parker, J. & Smith, C.—Modern Turkey. Routledge. 12/6 1940 949.6
Account of political and economic developments under Kemal Ataturk.

Strabolgi, J. M. Kenworthy, 10th baron.—Narvik and after. A study of the Scandinavian campaign. Hutchinson. 7/6 1940 940.53

Strasser, O.—Germany to-morrow. J. Cape. 8/6 1940 943.085
The programme of the Black Front, the dissenting German fascist organisation.

FICTION:

Allen, W.—Living space. M. Joseph. 8/-
Character studies of the residents of a poor street in an English provincial town.

Bates, H. E.—Country tales. J. Cape. 7/6
Collection of thirty short stories from former volumes.

Bell, N.—So perish the roses. Collins. .. 9/6
Written round the life of Charles Lamb.

Bottome, Phyllis.—Masks and faces. Faber & Faber. 8/6
Short stories by the author of "The mortal storm."

Bowen, M.—Exchange royal. Hutchinson. 8/6
Written round the English revolution of 1688.

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Psychological study of the relations between two men.

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Knight, Eric. Now pray we for our country. Cassell. 9/-
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Written round a hotel on the Riviera.

Sargeson, Frank.—A man and his wife. Caxton press. ..... (N.Z.) 6/-
Unusual sketches of New Zealand life.

Sinclair, Upton.—World's end. Laurie. .. 10/6
The son of a munitions maker and his experiences in world politics.

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